

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
SECDEF WASHDC 0000
JCS WASHDC 0000

CIA WASHDC 0000
USICA
NSC
USCINCEUR VAHINGEN GE
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS POUCH

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - AUGUST 25

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR AUGUST 25,
1978. FYI, SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS MR. KENNETH BROWN.

Q. LAST NIGHT BRIAN URQUHART OF THE UNITED NATIONS HELD A
BRIEFING IN NEW YORK IN WHICH HE SAID THAT THE FORCES OF
SOUTHERN LEBANON UNDER SHIDIAC HADDAD ARE RECEIVING ARMA-
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MENTS, TANKS AND HEAVY ARMAMENTS, FROM ISRAEL. MY QUES-
TION IS WHETHER THESE ARMS ARE AMERICAN.

A. FIRST OF ALL, I DON'T HAVE THE INFORMATION THAT YOU
REFER TO AS TO ARMS THAT MIGHT BE DELIVERED. IF THERE
ARE ARMS THAT ARE BEING DELIVERED, THEY ARE NOT ARMS THAT
WOULD BE PROVIDED TO ISRAEL. UNDER OUR AGREEMENTS WITH
ISRAEL, THE ISRAELIS HAVE ASSURED US THAT THEY ARE NOT
TRANSFERRING ANY ARMS THAT WE HAVE PROVIDED THEM, WHICH
ARE GOVERNED BY RESTRICTIONS AS TO WHAT TRANSFERS MIGHT
BE MADE WITH THEM. OF COURSE, ANY TRANSFERS HAVE TO HAVE
OUR APPROVAL.

Q. ALSO, REPORTS HAVE REACHED US THAT CAMILLE CHAMOON ,
THE FORMER PRESIDENT OF LEBANON, HAD A MEETING WITH
BEGIN, WEIZMAN AND MOSHE DAYAN. WHAT IS YOUR INFORMATION
ABOUT THIS SECRET MEETING?

A. I SAW THOSE REPORTS, BUT I HAVE NO INFORMATION AS TO
WHETHER OR NOT SUCH A MEETING TOOK PLACE. YOU WOULD
HAVE TO ADDRESS THE PARTIES CONCERNED.

A. THE LEBANESE PRIME MINISTER, DR. SALIM ALHESS,
ACCUSED THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE SPECIAL ENVOYS THAT
WERE SENT TO LEBANON A FEW WEEKS AGO THAT YOU HAVE MIS-
LED THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT BY ASKING THEM TO SEND THE
750-MAN UNIT TO THE SOUTH FOR THIS DEPLOYMENT WITH THE

UNITED NATIONS FORCES -- THE UNIFEL FORCES.

ESTERDAY, DR. CHARLES MALIK, REPRESENTING THE MILITIAS, WHO HAD BEEN THE REASON FOR THE FAILURE OF THE DEPLOYMENT OF THESE FORCES IN THE SOUTH, MET WITH HIGH STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS. WITH WHOM DID HE MEET, AND UPON WHOSE REQUEST DID THE MEETING TAKE PLACE, AND HOW WOULD YOU FIND HIM -- YOU WOULD YOU RECONCILE YOUR STAND THAT YOU WANT TO BACK THE LEBANESE CENTRAL GOV-
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ERNMENT AUTHORITY AND AT THE SAME TIME DEAL WITH THE CHRISTIAN MILITIAS?

A. I HAVE NO INFORMATION ON SUCH A MEETING.

Q. WILL YOU KINDLY TAKE IT?

A. I WILL TAKE THE QUESTION AS TO WHETHER SUCH A MEETING TOOK PLACE AND BETWEEN WHOM. I WILL REITERATE OUR STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE EXTENSION OF THE CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON THROUGHOUT LEBANON.

Q. YES. IT WAS ON THIS SAME THING. IN LIGHT OF THE FACT YOU HAVE SEEN THESE REPORTS OF A POSSIBLE MEETING BETWEEN HIGH ISRAELI OFFICIALS AND, IF I MIGHT CHARACTERIZE THEM AS SUCH, NAZI SUPPORTERS FROM LEBANON, HAVE YOU UNDERTAKEN TO GET ANY FURTHER ASSURANCES FROM THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT THAT THEY DON'T HAVE MORE PLANS FOR INTERFERENCE IN SOUTHERN LEBANON?

A. WITHOUT ACCEPTING YOUR CHARACTERIZATION OF THE PEOPLE WHO MIGHT HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE MEETING, I JUST DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ON THE MEETING. I DON'T EVEN KNOW THAT THE MEETING ACTUALLY TOOK PLACE.

Q. ABOUT A YEAR AGO, A SANDINISTA GROUP -- I DIDN'T REALIZE THERE WERE SEVERAL SANDINISTA GROUPS -- MET IN MEXICO CITY WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PLO AND HAD SOME STATEMENTS OF MUTUAL SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT. DO YOU KNOW WHETHER THESE PEOPLE ARE IN LEAGUE WITH THE PLO AND ARE PERHAPS TIED IN WITH SIMILAR TERRORIST GROUPS THAT ARE FUNDED BY TERRORIST MONEY?

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A. I DO NOT.

Q. THERE HAS BEEN A CHARACTERIZATION MADE OF A LEBANESE AS A NAZI OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT, AND YOU SAID THAT YOU

DON'T ACCEPT THE CHARACTERIZATION, WHICH IS FAIR ENOUGH. IT'S THE DECENT THING TO DO. BUT CAN'T YOU BE A LITTLE BIT STRONGER IN THE SENSE OF PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT NAZIS, WHO ARE USING THIS APPELLATION FOR ULTERIOR REASONS? THIS HAS BEEN DONE BEFORE, AT THE WHITE HOUSE AND IN THIS DEPARTMENT. MONDALE HAS BEEN INDIRECTLY ACCUSED OF TREASON BECAUSE HE TALKED WITH A JEWISH LEADER, AN AMERICAN JEWISH LEADER, SO ALL I'M ASKING IS WHETHER THE STATE DEPARTMENT CAN'T BE A LITTLE BIT MORE FORTHRIGHT AND DETERMINED TO KNOCK DOWN THIS SORT OF INEUNDO AND INSULT.

A. LET ME SAY THAT OUR REASON FOR BEING HERE EVERY DAY AT NOON -- THE REASON WE GO THROUGH THIS EXERCISE -- IS, HOPEFULLY, TO REPLY TO YOUR QUESTIONS TO PROVIDE INFORMATION TO THE EXTENT THAT WE CAN ON FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES. THERE HAS BEEN, DURING THE YEAR THAT I'VE BEEN HERE, AMONG A LOT OF PEOPLE THE DESIRE TO USE THE SESSION PRIMARILY TO PUT STATEMENTS ON THE RECORD AND NOT TO SOLICIT INFORMATION OR TO ELICIT INFORMATION. IT HAS COME FROM A LOT OF DIFFERENT PEOPLE, A LOT OF DIFFERENT SOURCES. I, PERSONALLY, THINK THAT THIS IS NOT A PROPER USE OF THIS BRIEFING. IT DOESN'T COME FROM JUST ONE INDIVIDUAL WHO MIGHT HAVE ASKED QUESTIONS TODAY. IT HAPPENS REPEATEDLY, AND IT HAPPENS FROM A LOT OF DIFFERENT SOURCES, PEOPLE WITH A LOT OF DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW. SO, JOE, MY APPEAL WOULD BE TO PEOPLE TO TRY TO STICK TO THE NEWS, TRY TO STICK TO ELICITING INFORMATION, TRY TO STAY AWAY FROM SENDING PEOPLE A MESSAGE, STAY AWAY FROM PUTTING SOMETHING ON THE RECORD, MAKING A STATEMENT USING THIS AS A FORUM FOR PUTTING ACROSS POLITICAL VIEWS. THAT IS NOT WHAT IT IS INTENDED UNCLASSIFIED

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FOR.

NOW, IF WE CAN GET BACK TO THE QUESTIONS.

Q. PRIME MINISTER BEGIN WAS QUOTED YESTERDAY AS HAVING SAID THAT IF THE PRICE OF A PEACE AGREEMENT AT CAMP DAVID IS SETTLEMENTS, THERE IS NO DEAL -- SOMETHING TO THAT EFFECT. I HAVE BEEN TOLD, ALTHOUGH I HAVEN'T SEEN IT MYSELF, THAT HE MADE A COMMENT ON FRIDAY THAT WAS QUOTED IN HA'ARETZ TO THE EFFECT THAT AS WELL AS PREPARING A PEACE PLAN, THEY WERE ALSO PREPARING TO FIGHT IF THEY HAD TO, AND AGAIN I WAS TOLD THAT THIS DREW SOME KIND OF RESPONSE FROM EITHER SADAT OR SOMEONE IN EGYPT. MY QUESTION IS, IN VIEW OF THE BLACKOUT THAT HAS BEEN IMPOSED HERE UPON COMMENT, DOES THE UNITED STATES HAVE A VIEW ON THESE TYPES OF COMMENT, THE HELPFULNESS OF THEM AT THIS STAGE?

A. I CAN'T CHARACTERIZE THEM. OF COURSE, ANY SOVEREIGN GOVERNMENT IS FREE TO MAKE ANY STATEMENT THAT IT WANTS TO. WE ARE IN A POSITION OF NOT COMMENTING .

Q. WELL, FINE, DON'T CHARACTERIZE THEM,BUT HAVEN'T YOU BEEN FOLLOWING A POLICY THAT WE WOULD ASK RESTRAINT FROM BOTH PARTIES BEFORE THEY COME TO CAMP DAVID?

A. WE WANT ALL PARTIES CONCERNED, INCLUDING OURSELVES, TO BE RESTRAINED AND TO GET DOWN TO THE BUSINESS AT HAND ONCE THE SUMMIT IS UNDER WAY.

Q. WOULDN'T YOU CONSIDER IT AN IMPEDIMENT WHEN BEGIN SAYS THIS?

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A. YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GET OUT OF ME A COMMENT TODAY. I JUST CAN'T DO IT.

Q. WHAT IS THE POSITION OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT ON A SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON SOUTHERN LEBANON?

A. I MAY HAVE SOME GUIDANCE FOR YOU ON THAT BACK IN THE OFFICE. IF THIS WERE PROPOSED, A SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON LEBAN WERE PROPOSED, CERTAINLY WE WOULD GIVE IT CONSIDERATION. THAT'S REALLY ALL I CAN SAY FOR YOU RIGHT NOW.

Q. NO.WHAT I WAS TOLD, YOU ARE PUTTING PRESSURE ON THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT AND OTHERS NOT TO HAVE ANY SECURITY COUNCIL UNTIL THE SUMMIT IS OVER.

A. I'M NOT AWARE OF PRESSURE, BUT I WILL BE --

Q. INFLUENCE OR PRESSURE, OR WHATEVER YOU WANT TO CALL IT.

A. I WILL BE WILLING TO DISCUSS THIS WITH YOU AFTER THE BRIEFING BECAUSE I MAY HAVE MORE FOR YOU IN MY OFFICE.

Q. IN THE MATTER OF THE SETTLEMENTS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, THERE IS A REPORT ISSUED BY THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE ENTITLED, HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS IN SELECTED COUNTRIES AND U.S. RESPONSE, AND IT WAS PREPARED BY THE CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE. IN THE SECTION ON ISRAEL, IT SAYS THAT THE UNITED STATES RESPONSE TO ISRAELI PRACTICES IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES IS, "THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE WHITE HOUSE HAVE DENOUNCED THE ISRAELI PRACTICE OF ESTABLISHING PERMANENT SETTLEMENTS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AND THERE HAVE BEEN PRESS REPORTS OF PRESIDENTIAL APPEALS TO END MIS-TREATMENT OF ARAB PRISONERS." I'M QUOTING THIS BECAUSE

I ASSUME YOU'RE NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE REPORT ITSELF.

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WHAT I'M ASKING IS, HAS THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE WHITE HOUSE, OR EITHER, EVER DENOUNCED THE SETTLEMENTS ON THE WEST BANK AS VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS? MY UNDERSTANDING IS THAT THE DENUNCIATION IS BASED ON THE GENEVA CONVENTION.

A. THAT'S CORRECT. IT IS ON THE BASIS OF THE FOURTH GENEVA CONVENTION GOVERNING THE ACTS OF AN OCCUPYING POWER.

Q. THEN, THIS WOULD BE AN ERROR AND WOULD BE MISLEADING TO SAY THE SETTLEMENTS ARE A VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AS WE UNDERSTAND THEM?

A. I DON'T RECALL OUR SAYING THAT THE SETTLEMENTS WERE A VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS; WE SAID THEY WERE NOT IN ACCORD WITH INTERNATIONAL LAW. CHRISTOPHER

NOTE BY OC/T: POUCHED ALGIERS.

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